

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4692

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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TAGS : PFOR/FR

SUBJECT : FRENCH PRESS VIEWS "KISSINGER PLAN"

SUMMARY : WHILE NOTING THAT FULL DETAILS OF ACCORD BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT ARE NOT YET KNOWN, PARIS PRESS NOVEMBER 9 DISCUSSES "KISSINGER PLAN" IN TONES OF ADMIRATION AND QUALIFIED OPTIMISM. SOME COMMENT PICTURES SOVIET UNION AS NOW A DISTINCT SECOND TO U.S. IN ARAB WORLD AS RESULT OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, AND QUESTIONS MOSCOW'S CONTINUED INFLUENCE IN A REGION WHERE CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL MAY SOON CEASE TO BE DOMINANT FACTOR. END
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SUMMARY .

1. IF DOMINANT NOTE IN PARIS PRESS AT OUTSET OF SECRETARY'S MIDDLE EAST SWING WAS SKEPTICISM, NEWS OF ISRAELI"EGYPTIAN ACCORD ARRANGED BY SECRETARY HAS PRODUCED DEFINITE TURN-AROUND. COMMENTARIES ARE MARKED BY ADMIRATION AND OPTIMISM, THE LATTER HEDGED WITH WARNINGS THAT ONLY MAIN OUTLINES OF AGREE-MENT ARE KNOWN, AND THAT SUCH "OBSTACLES" AS SYRIA'S ROLE REMAIN FORMIDABLE.

2. LEFT-OF CENTER COMBAT HEADLINED : "KISSINGER GAMBLES AND WINS." MODERATE FIGARO'S THIERRY DESJARDINS BEGAN HIS ANALYAIS BY :-MR. KISSINGER HAS WON HIS INCREDIBLE GAMBLE." IN RIGHT-WING AUREOLE, ROLAND FAURE SAID THE SECRETARY OF STATE "SEEMS CLOSE TO SUCCEEDING IN THE IMPOSSIBLE AND SHOWING THAT A SOLUTION... IS AT HAND". INDEPENDENT LE MONDE'S EDITORIAL PRONOUNCED FIVE-. POINT COMPROMISE AS "A HANDSOME SUCCESS FOR MR. KISSINGER". THOUGH HE HAS NO NEED OF IT, PRAISE FOR U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE WILL NOT BE LACKING , " COMBAT WROTE ." SUCCESS OF HIS MISSION MAKES HIS TALENT MORE OBVIOUS..." FIGARO MARVELED AT FACT THAT LESS THAN THREE WEEKS AGO JEWS AND ARABS WERE AT WAR, SADAT WAS DECLARING THE ENEMY TO BE THE U.S. AND WASHINGTON WAS ORGANIZING AIR SUPPLY TO ISRAEL. NOW, A PLAN HAS BEEN "IMPOSED" ON SADAT AND MRS. MEIR, PAPER SAID, ADDING : " NEVER BEFORE HAVE ARABS AND ISRAELIS BEEN IN ACCORD ON A PLAN, ON A PROJECT, ON ANYTHING. IT IS ALREADY A GREAT VICTORY FOR MR. KISSINGER, WHO THUS IN THE END DESERVES HIS NOBEL PRIZE."" IN SAME SPIRIT, COMBAT SAID SECSTATE " HAS WON HIS CREDENTIALS AS A STATESMEN."

3. COMBAT EDITORIAL POINTED OUT THAT, WHILE MOSCOW ARMED EGYPT AND AVOIDED 1967 TYPE DEFEAT FOR CAIRO, ONLY U.S. COULD SEIZE THE NEW CHANCE FOR PEACE. SADAT, IT SAID, FOUGHT WITH SOVIET ARMS BUT " ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO WASHINGTON". FIGARO'S THIERRY DESJARDINS PUT THIS SAME IDEA DIFFERENTLY : " ARABS STARTED THE WAR", HE SAID, " TO OFFER A FEELER TO THE AMERICANS". SADAT AND ASSAD, HE SAID, "FUNDAMENTALLY PRO-WESTERN" DESPITE APPEARANCES, KNEW

WASHINGTON WANTED TO SOLVE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM BUT COULD NOT ACT BECAUSE SITUATION WAS TOTALLY BLOCKED. EVERYTHING HAD TO BE SHAKEN UP, HE SAID, TO "REDISTRIBUTE THE CARDS". THUS, " EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN SOLDIERS PREPARED THE GROUND FOR MR. KISSINGER". TODAY, UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID DESJARDINS, " WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHY SADAT STARTED THE WAR-- TO GET AMERICA BACK, AND TO MAKE PEACE."

4. FOR DESJARDINS, "BASIC PROBLEM" IN EVENTUAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR SETTLEMENT -- WHERE " THE AMERICANS WILL CERTAINLY HAVE THE FIRST WORD"-- IS PALESTINIAN QUESTION. BUT HERE, TOO, HE SAID, " MR. KISSINGER HAS A PLAN", DESCRIBED AS CREATION OF PALES-TINIAN STATE ON WEST BANK "POLITICALLY ATTACHED TO AMMAN, AND

ECONOMICALLY TO ISRAEL." THUS PALESTINIANS WOULD MAKE FIRST "PEACEFUL CONTACT" BETWEEN ARABS AND JEWS, AND THIS WOULD "FINALLY PERMIT ZIONIST GRAFT TO TAKE ON ARAB SOIL." BUT THIS WILL TAKE MONTHS FOR DIPLOMATS TO AGREE ON, HE SAID, AND "YEARS FOR MEN TO ACCEPT."

5. WARNINGS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER PROBLEMS ON ROAD TO SETTLEMENT WERE NOT LACKING." THE ARAB WORLD IS EXPECTING FROM AMERICA DECISIVE PRESSURE ON ISRAEL", INTONED PRO-GOVERNMENT FRANCE-SOIR. " DR. KISSINGER WELL DESERVED HIS NOBEL PRIZE -- THIS IS THE GENERAL REACTION IN ARAB COUNTRIES. NO ONE IS REPROACHING HIM FOR ANYTHING FURTHER. HE MERELY HAD TO COME TO CAIRO" AND IN CONVERSATION WITH SADAT " HE TOTALLY REVERSED THE SITUATION". BUT, SAID PAPER, IT REMAINS TO CONVINCE THE ISRAELIS, WHO WILL BE ASKED TO "GRADUALLY WITHDRAW". LE MONDE, WHICH FELT SADAT HAD MADE "SIZEABLE" CONCESSIONS AND SHOWN A "PARTICULARLY CONCILIATORY SPIRIT", ASKED FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF FIVE-POINT ACCORD : WHO WILL CONTROL CORRIDOR LINKING EGYPTIAN FIRST AND THIRD ARMIES, WILL BLOKADE OF BAB EL-MANDEB STRAITS BE LIFTED TOTALLY OR PARTIALLY AND UNDER WHOSE AUSPICES WOULD PEACE TALKS BE HELD ? LE MONDE ALSO SPOKE OF MORE "FORMIDABLE OBSTACLES." ASKING WHETHER SECSTATE WILL HAVE SKILL AND PATIENCE TO BRING TO NEGOTIATING TABLE SYRIANS, JORDANIANS, AND PALESTINIANS, TOWARD WHOM ISRAELI ATTITUDE IS "MUCH LESS FLEXIBLE".

6 ROLAND FAURE IN AURORE AFTER SUGGESTING THAT CORE OF ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN ACCORD IS "IMPLICIT RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL BY EGYPT IN ACCEPTING DIRECT TALKS", SAID MOSCOW REMAINS "BIG QUESTION MARK." IF SEEMS CERTAIN, HE WROTE, THAT SECSTATE HAD RECEIVED KREMLIN ASSURANCES BEFOREHAND. BUT WHAT MOTIVE, HE ASKED, LED MOSCOW TO UNDERWRITE SOLUTION WHICH REMOVES BEST PRETEXT FOR SOVIET IMPLANTATION ON SHORES OF MEDITERRANEAN AND PERMITS U.S. TO RECOVER ITS FOOTING AMONG ARABS ? FAURE'S ANSWER IS THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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SOVIET THINK REOPENING OF CANAL AND BETTER ACCESS TO RED SEA AND INDIAN OCEAN WILL PERMIT SOVIET FLEET TO ACT MORE RAPIDLY IN POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION WITH CHINA.

7. EFFECT OF KISSINGER PLAN ON MOSCOW, IN COMBAT VIEW, IS TO ASSURE U.S. OF " CERTAIN PRE-EMINENCE" OVER SOVIET UNION. MOSCOW WILL "CONTRIBUTE" TO PEACE AGREEMENT, SAID COMBAT, "BUT WILL THE ARAB COUNTRIES RECEIVE MOSCOW WITH THE SAME EAGERNESS WHEN THEY NO LONGER NEED TO WAGE WAR ? IT IS REMARKABLE THAT AFTER SUCH A LONG PRESENCE IN THE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, MOSCOW'S POSITION APPEARSSO PRECARIOUS, AND THAT AFTER SUCH A LONG ABSENCE, THE U.S. POSITION SEEMS CERTAIN OF A BETTER FUTURE."IRWIN

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